

Monthly Meeting Minutes 1/6/21

3:15 pm, via Zoom video chat

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Attendees: Denise Adams, Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Emily Bridges, Gane Brooking, Kyler Carlson, Kevin Clerici, Jim Duran, Jaydon Gaines, Veronica Z. Garcia, Jennifer Harkey, Meredith Hart, Roseanne Hernandez, Mike Johnson, John Sanders Jones, Kelly Kivlahan, Robert March, Miguel Marquez, Sandra Meyer, Cathi Nye, Kappy Paulson, Jan Schmutte, Karol Schulkin, Elizabeth R. Stone, Summer Ward, Susan White Wood

- I. Call to order - Judy Alexandre
- II. Technical questions - Kevin Clerici
- III. Approval of the agenda for 1/6/21 - MSC
- IV. Approval of the minutes for 12/2/20 - MSC
- V. Treasurer's Report - Jan Schmutte
 - A. Current balance - \$2,316.46 (no change).
- VI. **VSSTF still requires a co-chair. Seeking a volunteer to step up!**
- VII. Review VSSTF mission, set goals for 2021 - Judy Alexandre
 - A. Reminder: our mission is focused on homelessness.
 - B. Susan White Wood - we need to include advocating for funding for supportive services.
 1. How do we measure gains in supportive services in the community?
 2. Judy Alexandre - We added the need for supportive housing for those with mental illness.
 3. Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) has a formula for calculating the cost of supportive service units.
 - a) Could use this to come up with funding targets.
 - C. Jerry Breiner - We should keep the mission broad, without specific numbers.
 1. Add specific goals to more focused documents.
- VIII. Discussion on housing (affordable, inclusionary) - Veronica Z. Garcia, Judy Alexandre
 - A. Veronica Z. Garcia - director of business development for People's Self Help Housing
 - B. Discussion of handout the Judy Alexandre emailed on 1/6/21:
 1. **Homes for All Goals** as emailed
 - a) Short-term goal: (First Quarter of 2021)
 - (1) Expand the City of Ventura's current inclusionary housing policy to include new rental projects citywide. Projects would be required to provide 15 percent affordable units as follows: 5% very-low income and 10% low-income.
 - b) Long-term goals (later in 2021 as Housing Element update is developed)
 - (1) Incorporate an in-lieu option for all projects subject to inclusionary housing policies.
 - (2) Implement a linkage fee on new commercial projects. Based on feasibility recommended by BAE Urban Economics, this fee

would apply to new commercial/retail and hotels. (Excluded: manufacturing, industrial, office)

- (3) Implement an Affordable Housing Zoning Overlay which designates parcels or groups of parcels as suitable for affordable housing development. This zoning designation would permit by-right the use of affordable multifamily in addition to the permitted uses of its underlying zone.
- (4) Allow all-residential in parcels currently zoned mixed-use where deemed appropriate.
- (5) Increase the percent of affordable units required under the City's inclusionary housing ordinance pertaining to for sale projects.

2. Judy Alexandre - some of these recommendations date back to 2014!

a) Highlighting one short term goal in hopes of making progress.

(1) There is resistance to any changes before completing the general plan update.

(a) Taking no immediate action would delay progress by 2 years.

b) Still need to meet with 2 city council members to discuss the recommendations.

3. Jerry Breiner - Meeting with the city

a) Housing element must be completed by October.

b) The responsibility to build affordable units is **not** the city's.

(1) However, Ventura needs to present a process to developers.

c) Agrees that completing the Homes For All short term goal is important.

(1) Judy Alexandre - If we want action taken on the short term goal, it has to be a council priority (discuss it at the 1/23 council meeting)

(a) Will be sending letters to all council members urging them to prioritize expanding the City of Ventura's current inclusionary housing policy.

C. Judy Alexandre - Ventura needs 5-6K new housing units.

1. Ventura is woefully behind in adding v. low and low income housing units.

a) These units should be built citywide, and not just in one district (typically West End).

2. Veronica Garcia - We could advocate for higher percentages for moderate income units (for General Plan update).

3. Karol Schulkin - We should provide examples of how affordable housing will benefit the community.

D. Judy Alexandre proposes the following 4 goals for addressing homelessness:

1. Acceptance of the inclusionary housing plan as developed.

2. Inclusion of housing for those with mental illness.

3. Continuation of goal to be advocates for low-income housing development with the inclusion of supportive services.
4. Zoning focus:
 - a) Overlays, mixed use. Can be very specific.
5. MSC - To refine annual goals based on the above 4 points.
 - a) Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner & Kevn Clerici will work on refining the goals.

E. Next steps?

1. Mike Johnson - Look at existing zoning regulations and what they allow for residential development.
 - a) Jerry Breiner and Veronica Garcia will collaborate on this task.

IX. Reports

A. City of Ventura - Meredith Hart

1. Foul Weather Shelter program
 - a) Has not triggered yet (40°F or >½" rain)
 - b) Collecting stay-warm packs at The ARCH to distribute to our homeless population
 - (1) Lots of donations, but not all usable.
 - (a) Please wash all used items!
 - (2) Need:
 - (a) 50 tarps
 - (b) 70 ponchos
 - (c) 30 blankets
 - (d) More handwarmers
 - (e) 50 scarves
 - (f) 50 beanies/watchcaps
 - (g) Duffel bags or some other way to bundle the packs.
 - c) Jim Duran - the program is generally okay for food right now.
 - (1) Meredith Hart - congregations are volunteering for weeklong stretches.
2. General Plan Update - Online survey available until 1/8/21
3. Safe & Clean, Affordable Housing and Homelessness Committee
 - a) New committee members are still being determined.
 - b) Next meeting on 2/1 at 4pm.
4. River bottoms update.
 - a) Fewer fires of late.
 - b) Ventura River - cleanup planned for Seaside Park area on 1/7.
 - c) Santa Clara River - Larger cleanup efforts
 - (1) 2 days planned for the end of January.
 - (2) Trash is building up too quickly.
 - d) Law enforcement is maintaining a more regular presence.

C. Continuum Of Care - Jennifer Harkey

1. Grant Funds

a) Homeless Housing, Assistance, & Prevention (HHAP) Program - round 2

(1) \$1.6M for county and CoC allocations:

- (a) Supportive services
- (b) Landlord engagement
- (c) Rental assistance
- (d) Project Room Key

b) HUD approved extending existing projects with a simple renewal process

(1) Supportive housing and rapid rehousing.

c) Bonus funding for working with victims of domestic violence.

2. Point In Time Count

a) Street count not happening in 2021

b) Sheltered count and HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) data analysis will happen.

3. Federal assistance

a) \$19 million expected for homelessness prevention and rental assistance.

(1) Eviction moratorium expires on 2/1/21

(a) Expect it to be extended due to COVID

4. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) - designated some money for rental assistance.

5. Project Room Key

a) Ventura Vagabond - still have funds to support through 2/21, if not 3/21

b) Have been able to transition people into permanent housing through the project.

c) 190 households placed countywide.

d) Working closely with shelters to find places for vulnerable populations.

6. Project Home Key

a) Mercy House closed on Oxnard Vagabond on 12/10/20

(1) Still non-congregant shelter for now

(a) 50 units for next 18 months

(b) 20 units for extended recuperative care.

(2) Will eventually be 70 units of supportive housing.

(3) Elizabeth R. Stone - what are the pet options?

(a) Jennifer Harkey - Project Room Key accepts pets, which Buddy Nation helps with.

D. The ARCH - no report

E. Others

1. Tenderlife / City Center - Jim Duran

a) 3 upstairs rooms at City Center have been approved.

(1) Now 30 complete rooms.

2. Salvation Army - Denise Adams

a) Shelters are currently full.

F. Adjourn meeting.

Next meeting is 3 February, 3:15PM on Zoom. The focus will be on approving the VSSTF 2021 goals.